Garage and Shed Security – Advice from Essex Police

Whilst most houses have adequate security what is often neglected is the shed or garage, "nothing much in there" I hear you say, "Just a garden spade and fork", but these are perfect tools for a burglar to use to get into your house. Adds insult to injury when the tool used to break into your house is your own, so give it some attention.

Garages and sheds by the nature of their construction and position especially when away from the house are always going to be vulnerable. Quite often the supplied locks provide just the barest minimum security and are easily overcome so always consider supplementing the existing locks with further locking systems both for the doors and items within.

On garage doors this could be by adding locking bolts to both sides of the "up and over door" or a garage door defender in the ground in front of the door, if you have side door don't forget the security on this too.

With sheds coach-bolt and plate the padlock hasp sections to the frame and door, use a good quality "Close Shackle" padlock or a key operated mortice lock; don't forget the hinges ensure they cannot be unscrewed.

Consider using "Ground Anchors" or "Shed Shackles" to chain larger items such as ladders, mowers and pedal cycles to (again good quality padlock and chain); keep chains tight so that it is not in contact with a surface it can be struck against. Protect windows with a wire mesh and fit a curtain or white wash the windows to prevent prying eyes.

Visibly security mark your property with your post code and house number as this reduces the value to the thief; you can register serial numbers free of charge at www.immobilise.com . There are also a number of commercially available security marking systems available that are suitable for a wide range of products and others for specific products.

It is also worth adding security lighting and a shed alarm to the shed or garage, there are even alarms available that when activated call your mobile phone, these are relatively inexpensive and available from most DIY/hardware stores. If siting a new shed where possible position it within sight of rooms in the house routinely occupied.

Products that are fit for purpose can found by looking for the "Secured by Design" or "Sold Secure" logos, or on their websites http://www.securedbydesign.com/ or http://www.soldsecure.com/ .

For further crime prevention advice see www.essex.police.uk/advice or www.thecrimepreventionwebsite.com. There is also some good garden specific security advice from the RHS at: https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?PID=606#section-2